

Message Text

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TO CINCPAC

S E C R E T STATE 016451

EXDIS MIL ADDEE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE CINCPAC FOR POLAD

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 016451 ACTION JIDDA TEHRAN INFO MUSCAT
ABU DHABI KUWAIT SANAA DOHA CAIRO BEIRUT DAMASCUS LONDON MANAMA
AMMAN SECDEF JAN 23:

QUOTE

S E C R E T STATE 016451

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, MU, PFOR

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SULTAN QABOOS OF OMAN TO WASHINGTON

REF: A) STATE 15705 B) STATE 13448, C) STATE 12396,
D) TEHRAN 642

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

1. SUMMARY: US MILITARY SALES TO OMAN BECAME SALIENT ISSUE
OF SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS HELD BY SULTAN QABOOS AND OTHER
MEMBERS HIS PARTY WITH USG DURING JANUARY 9-11 VISIT TO
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WASHINGTON. USG REQUESTED OCCASIONAL ACCESS TO BRITISH-OPERATED AIRFIELD ON MASIRAH ISLAND. END SUMMARY.

2. SULTAN QABOOS, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS UNCLE AND PERSONAL ADVISOR SAYYID TARIK, FOREIGN MINISTER ZAWAWI, MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS RAJAB, AND PERSONAL ADVISORS GHASSAN SHAKER AND YAHYA OMAR VISITED WASHINGTON JANUARY 9-11. A PRIVATE VISIT, IT SERVED USEFUL PURPOSE IN INTRODUCING THE SULTAN "O USG AND US BUSINESS LEADERSHIP. CALLS ON THE PRESIDENT, SECRETARY KISSINGER, AND SECRETARY SCHLESINGER WERE SUPPLEMENTED BY SOCIAL FUNCTIONS HOSTED BY THE VICE PRESIDENT, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, THE OMANI AMBASSADOR AND DAVID ROCKEFELLER. FOR QABOOS, THE OBJECTIVE OF HIS VISIT WAS TO

BURNISH HIS IMAGE. IT GAVE US OCCASION TO ENCOURAGE OMAN TO CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS AGAINST THE INSURGENCY IN DHOFAR, LOOKING TO FRIENDLY REGIONAL STATES FOR SUPPORT, AND TO COMPLIMENT QABOOS ON THE USE OF HIS COUNTRY'S RESOURCES TO BRING ABOUT RAPID ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. DURING SUBSTANTIVE MEETINGS, WE MADE CLEAR THAT USG HAS NO INTENTION TO INVOLVE ITSELF IN DHOFAR WAR OR IN ANY WAY TO DISPLACE UK, IRANIAN OR JORDANIAN SUPPORT.

3. QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE SALE OF CERTAIN MILITARY EQUIPMENT, SOME TRAINING, AND THE USE OF MASIRAH FOR OCCASIONAL USE BY US MILITARY AIRCRAFT WERE RAISED DURING VISIT:

(A) TELESCOPIC SIGHTS: IN MEETING WITH PRESIDENT, QABOOS RAISED WHAT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT USG HAD REFUSED COMMERCIAL EXPORT LICENSE OF TELESCOPIC RIFLE SIGHTS. LATER INVESTIGATION REVEALED THAT THE US EXPORTER HAD MISINFORMED THE BRITISH IMPORTER AND THAT LICENSE HAD ALREADY BEEN ISSUED.

(B) TOWS: OMANIS HAD PREVIOUSLY ASKED FOR TOWS TO USE IN THE EVENT OF A PDRY TANK ATTACK IN DHOFAR WAR AND ALTHOUGH WE HAD EARLIER TURNED DOWN OMANI REQUEST BECAUSE OF OUR LIMITED SUPPLY SITUATION, THE SECRETARY OFFERED SALE OF LIMITED NUMBER OF TOW LAUNCHERS AND MISSILES DURING MEETING WITH QABOOS. SULTAN PROMPTLY ACCEPTED. OMANIS HAVE SINCE SIGNED LETTER OF OFFER AND 10 LAUNCHERS, 180 MISSILES, 20 PRACTICE MISSILES, RELATED EQUIPMENT

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HAVE BEEN AIR SHIPPED TO OMAN, ACCOMPANIED BY TWO US TECHNICIANS TO SHOW HOW TO USE LAUNCHERS. THIS AIR SHIPMENT ALSO INCLUDED SOME 2,000 CLAYMORE MINES WHICH OMANIS HAD EARLIER PURCHASED FROM US.

(C) SURVEY OF OMANI MILITARY: DURING MEETING WITH SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, IDEA OF SMALL US MILITARY SURVEY TEAM WAS DISCUSSED. QABOOS, NOTING THAT OMANI NAVY JUST

CREATED AND THAT PAKISTANI ADVISORS HAD NOT PROVED FULLY SATISFACTORY, WELCOMED ADVICE ESPECIALLY IN THIS SECTOR. OMANIS HAVE SINCE INDICATED THEY WOULD LIKE TEAM TO COME END OF MARCH.

(D) US TRAINING OF OMANI PILOTS: QABOOS ALSO SUGGESTED POSSIBLE INTEREST IN SENDING OMANI MILITARY TO US FOR FLIGHT TRAINING AT SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE, BUT AGREED THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY COORDINATED WITH BRITISH.

(E) USE OF MASIRAH: DURING MEETING WITH QABOOS, SECRETARY ASKED IF US COULD USE BRITISH-OPERATED AIRFIELD AT MASIRAH FOR OCCASIONAL LANDINGS BY US MILITARY AIRCRAFT AS NEEDED INCLUDING EMERGENCY USE. QABOOS AGREED AND ASKED THAT US WORK OUT DETAILS WITH HMG AFTER HE HAD INFORMED BRITISH. DISCUSSIONS WITH HMG ARE NOW UNDER WAY AND FCO HAS ASKED US FOR DETAILS ON HOW USG CONTEMPLATES USING MASIRAH.

4. QABOOS EXPRESSED COMPLETE SATISFACTION WITH CURRENT HANDLING OF OMANI REQUESTS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. OMANIS MADE NO NEW REQUESTS DURING VISIT AND DID NOT RAISE CURRENT PROJECTS UNDER DISCUSSION OR ASK FOR A MORE FORMALIZED ARRANGEMENT TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. QABOOS SEEMED HAPPY WITH CURRENT PEACE CORPS OPERATION IN OMAN.

5. COMMENT: SULTAN'S VISIT STRENGTHENED ALREADY EXCELLENT RELATIONS BETWEEN US AND OMAN. IN RECENT MONTHS OMANIS HAVE SOUGHT INCREASED US TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, IN SOME CASES REPLACING TRADITIONAL BRITISH ROLES. SULTAN SOUGHT AT MEETING WITH DEFENSE OFFICIALS TO EXPAND DIALOGUE ON US-OMANI MILITARY COOPERATION. DISCUSSIONS WITH MEMBERS SULTAN'S PARTY SUGGEST OMANI GOVERNMENT WOULD, IF GIVEN CHANCE, EVENTUALLY LIKE REPLACE OVERALL UK BIG POWER TUTELAGE WITH US PRESENCE. US POLICY, HOW-
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EVER, REMAINS UNCHANGED: US FULLY SUPPORTS REGIONAL (PLUS UK) SUPPORT TO OMAN GOVERNMENT EFFORT ON DHOFAR, WE SEEK NO DIRECT INVOLVEMENT, BUT WE ARE PREPARED TO SELL CERTAIN MILITARY EQUIPMENT WHEN REQUESTED TO SUPPLEMENT NORMAL UK SOURCE OF SUPPLY. OUR INTEREST IN OCCASIONAL USE OF MASIRAH IS RELATED PRIMARILY TO SUPPORT OF OUR PRESENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN.

6. FOR JIDDA AND TEHRAN: YOU SHOULD BRIEF HOST GOVERNMENTS AT APPROPRIATE LEVEL, DRAWING ON PARAS 1 THROUGH 4 ABOVE AND CURRENT STATE PRESS GUIDANCE (REFTELS A & B). NOTE THAT EARLIER PRESS GUIDANCE (REFTEL C) HAS BEEN OUTDATED BY EVENTS. YOU SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT GIVE HOST GOVERNMENTS OUR INTERPRETATION OMANI ATTITUDES (PARA 5).

GIVEN WILDLY EXAGGERATED PRESS STORIES CONCERNING US-OMANI MILITARY RELATIONS, YOU SHOULD STRESS THE FOLLOWING:

A) THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION OF A US BASE IN OMAN WITH THE SULTAN. THE US HAS NO BASE IN OMAN, AND IS NOT INTERESTED IN ESTABLISHING A BASE THERE.

B) US INTEREST IN OCCASIONAL LANDING RIGHTS ON MASIRAH IS RELATED TO OVERALL US INDIAN OCEAN PRESENCE.

C) THE US IS NOT INVOLVED IN THE DHOFAR WAR, AND HAS NO INTENTION OF GETTING INVOLVED. THERE ARE NO US MILITARY IN THE DHOFAR NOR, FOR THAT MATTER, PERMANENTLY ASSIGNED ANYWHERE IN OMAN. THE US CONTINUES TO FULLY SUPPORT THE OMANI DHOFAR STRATEGY, SUPPLEMENTED BY ASSISTANCE FROM REGIONAL STATES AND THE UK.

D) THE SALE OF TOW MISSILES IS IN RESPONSE TO A LONG-STANDING OMANI REQUEST. IT IS NOT A "MASSIVE" SALE, AND DOES NOT SIGNIFY ANY SHIFT IN US ARMS SALES POLICY TOWARDS OMAN, WHICH CONTINUES TO BE THAT THE US IS WILLING, WHEN ASKED, TO SELL ARMS TO OMAN TO SUPPLEMENT (NOT DISPLACE) OMAN'S USUAL SOURCES OF MILITARY SUPPLY. THE ONLY REPEAT ONLY OTHER FMS MILITARY SALES TO OMAN WERE 2000 CLAYMORE MINES, A DEAL ARRANGED BEFORE THE SULTAN'S VISIT. THERE WAS NO REPEAT NO DISCUSSION OF ANY POTENTIAL FUTURE SALES.

7. FOR INFO ADDRESSEES: ON AN IF-ASKED BASIS, YOU MAY INFORM HOST GOVERNMENTS ALONG LINES CURRENT STATE PRESS GUIDANCE (REFTELS A & B) PARA 6 ABOVE AND, IF PRESSED,

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YOU MAY FURTHER DRAW ON PARAS 1-4 ABOVE. INGERSOLL
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